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SHYNESS IN THE CLASSROOM: A STUDY IN NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION CODES

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THESIS

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the College of Communication and Information at the University of Kentucky

By

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

SHYNESS IN THE CLASSROOM: A STUDY IN NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION CODES

This study examined the experiences of shy, introverted, and apprehensive students in the college classroom. This study was framed by multiple goals theory to discover how these students use nonverbal communication to achieve their task, identity, and relational goals in the classroom. Shy, introverted, and apprehensive students face challenges in the classroom especially when asked to verbally participate or give presentations that their more outgoing classmates may not face. Participants ($N = 16$) participated in focus groups where they discussed their experiences, perceptions, and feelings about participation in their college courses. Results showed that these students do experience apprehension in communication situations, often avoiding participation when possible, and that they do use nonverbal communication to meet their task, identity, and relational goals in the classroom. Implications for theory and for both students and instructors, limitations, and future directions for research are discussed.

KEYWORDS: Shyness, Communication Apprehension, Multiple Goals Theory, Participation, Nonverbal Communication

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May 2, 2019

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For my parents.

Thank you for your unending support, patience, and love throughout my life and especially over these last two years. Thank you for always being interested in what I am working on, sharing my frustrations and triumphs, and checking in to make sure I was still getting some sleep. Thank you for making my favorite vegetables every time I came home and making the tallest ice cream cones. I love you.

I would be remiss to not also mention Pants, my cat who stayed by my side during the whole researching, writing, and editing process, who never missed an opportunity to nap directly on top of whatever notes I needed most, and climbed on top of my keyboard when it was time to take a break.

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In the last several years, educational techniques have moved from being lecture based into more seminar and discussion-based formats where a significant portion of the grade a student receives may be based on participation (Rocca, 2010). This format with an emphasis on participation privileges the most extroverted and outgoing students and disadvantages the quieter students who may be less comfortable with answering a question in front of the whole class or interjecting their viewpoint into the discussion. Recent research shows that as many as 1/3 to 1/2 of all students may be categorized as quiet, shy, or introverted (Cain & Klein, 2015). Many of these students reflect on their educational experience, especially their high school experience, and see it as an unpleasant and unhappy time in their lives, while students who are more extroverted and outgoing reflect on high school as a relatively comfortable experience. To help these shyer students have a better educational experience and more comfort in classrooms, it is important to gain a greater understanding of them and create strategies for helping them succeed.

In addition to quiet, shy, or introverted students there are also students who experience communication apprehension. This is "fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons" (McCroskey, 2001, p. 40). Communication apprehension can prompt physiological changes that are common responses to stress like sweaty palms, dry mouth, and a racing heart. These traits (i.e., shyness, introversion, apprehension) and experiences can work individually or in combination with each other to affect a student's success in the classroom for better or for worse. A student who is shy and introverted may experience more pronounced effects

of communication apprehension (McCroskey, 2001). Increased anxiety and tension surrounding more major communication situations like public speaking can lead to more minor classroom communication events like simply raising your hand to answer a question becoming an anxiety ridden event leading students to avoid it at all costs even to the detriment of their educational success. Students may also experience a more specific form of communication apprehension: participation apprehension. Participation apprehension is anxiety and fear related to engaging in discussion-based activities in the classroom (Neer, 1987). Although participation is generally viewed as a positive classroom behavior by educators, outgoing students, and scholars, shy students may see it differently. Thus, some shy, introverted, or apprehensive students may experience face threat from the pressure to participate. Further, some students may be less apprehensive when having one on one communication with another student but feel extreme apprehension at the idea of raising their hand to contribute to a class wide discussion.

All students deserve a chance to learn and succeed in the classroom, and those who feel most comfortable being outspoken should not take over the learning environment. However, Howard and Henney (1998) found that 90% of class time interactions are done by only a small number of students and in a typical class only one third were regularly participating and up to half of the students in a typical class did not participate at all. It is essential to help less outspoken students learn skills and strategies for communicating and becoming more comfortable in the classroom and beyond. Thus, having a greater understanding of nonverbal communication in the classroom may help instructors work with and reach a variety of students and create better ways of evaluating student participation and achievement that does not privilege the outgoing students. Not

all students participate equally for a number of reasons but, it is important to remember that failure to participate does not automatically reveal disrespect, disinterest, or apathy for the course or the instructor (White, 2011).

If current research is accurate, then a significant majority of students are shy, introverted, and apprehensive and a significant number of students are not overtly participating in class. Thus, it is vital to develop a greater understanding of these students and their role and behavior in the classroom. Instructors need to understand strategies to reach these students and students need strategies to show they are indeed engaged and learning in a classroom, even if they are not comfortable participating verbally in the class. Many instructors will point to the use of participation grades as a motivator to get students to speak up in class, but despite the threat of losing points and receiving a lower grade many students still avoid verbal participation (Meyer, 2009). The decisions students make about verbal participation, whether to engage in it or avoid it, may be attributed to their goals.

Multiple goals theory (MGT, Caughlin, 2010) will be used as a theoretical framework for this research to examine the relational, task, and identity goals of shy, introverted, and apprehensive students in the classroom. MGT forwards that all individuals communicate to achieve these three goals, although, some goals may become more important in interactions than others. Shy, introverted, and apprehensive students are likely struggling to balance their relational goals (e.g., with peers and instructors), their identity goals (e.g., fears of face threat or embarrassment when participating), and their task goals (e.g., academic success). This research in particular focuses on the experience of these shy, introverted, and apprehensive students within the learning

environment and how students can use nonverbal communication to help them achieve these multiple goals, help combat communication and participation apprehension, and overcome potential instructor (mis)perceptions that they are not engaged in the classroom.

With this phenomena in mind, the overarching research question being addressed in this study is:

> RQ: How are nonverbal codes used in the classroom by shy, introverted, and apprehensive students to show participation and manage multiple communication goals?

To address this overarching research question, there are multiple goals of this study. First, the research conducted in this thesis will gain an understanding of how shy, introverted, and apprehensive students use nonverbal codes to show engagement and participation in the classroom to their instructors. Second, this study will illuminate how these students use nonverbal communication to meet their task, relational, and identity goals in the classroom. Third, this study will provide insight into shy student behavior to help educators develop skills and strategies for reaching these students and consequently for fairly assessing their participation beyond merely speaking up during class.

In the following pages, existing literature on classroom facilitation styles, student participation, nonverbal communication, and student communication and participation apprehension will be reviewed to develop an argument that while shy, introverted, and apprehensive students may participate verbally less than their outgoing and extroverted classmates, they are still attempting to be engaged and involved in class. Data will be collected from shy and introverted students using focus groups and then analyzed using

MGT as a sensitizing framework to assess how and why students behave the way they do in the classroom. Results will be discussed and considered in terms of providing answers for the research questions and provide future directions for this research to be used in classrooms to help educators develop pedagogical skills and assessment techniques to help shy, introverted, and apprehensive students achieve success in the classroom.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

In order to conduct research on this topic, an understanding of the background concepts must be developed, including the common learning and classroom environments, what participation in the classroom is, an exploration of nonverbal communication behaviors, different forms of apprehension in the classroom, and how MGT can be used to understand student behaviors.

Evolving Learning Environments and Student Types

There is not one ideal learning or teaching environment that works for all instructors or all students. Instead it is up to instructors and course developers to take course content and use a variety of strategies to create a course that benefits all students and helps them reach learning outcomes. As previously discussed, teaching styles have moved from a traditional lecture style to a more seminar or discussion-based style where verbal participation is valued (Sparks, 2012). This evolution, while widely beneficial to student learning and engagement and participation has some drawbacks for shy or introverted students (Rocca, 2010).

A seminar style course, which dates back to Socrates and Plato, asks students to complete assigned reading and then with the broad guidance of an instructor they discuss the ideas and concepts from the reading ("Teaching Commons," 2017). This discussion style encourages students to think deeply and form arguments to either agree or disagree with the arguments and overarching themes in the text ("Teaching Commons," 2017). Seminar courses are designed to have students go beyond learning the basic material and instead learn to form arguments and complex thought. Discussion based courses are similar, but typically in discussion-based courses the instructor plays a larger role in

guiding discussion by asking clear questions about the topic at hand rather than asking more general questions or having students ask questions as is common in seminar style ("Teaching Commons," 2017). There are also courses that focus on creating a more active learning environment. In an active learning environment, students are expected to be actively involved in learning (Ruder, Stanford, & Gandhi, 2018). This style is often used for courses that teach specific skills like nursing or other professional careers (Ruder et al., 2018). Active learning courses require students to use teamwork, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills to process information and learn the content to meet learning outcomes (Ruder et al., 2018). Each of these styles prioritizes verbal participation. These course styles are closely related to two methods of learning discussed in the following paragraph.

There are two methods or paradigms of learning that guide course objectives and content: constructivism and the cognitivist paradigm. Piaget's constructivism is interested in the knowledge and learning that is created through social exchange and interaction (Buckner & Norman, 2017). Bruner's cognitivist paradigm posits that learning occurs through an active and engaged mind (Buckner & Norman, 2017). Cognitivists believe that over time learners' abilities to process information improves until they are able to understand, synthesize, and produce increasingly abstract and complex ideas (Buckner & Norman, 2017). Discussion based courses fall under a more constructivist frame while seminar and active learning styles are more cognitivist. While these styles do differ, in each of these styles, students are expected to be active and engaged in each course and often that means verbally participating which can be extremely difficult and stressful for some students.

There are typically seven types of students in a classroom: shy or introverted, aggressive, talkative, know-it-alls, complainers, latecomers, and tech addicts (Karve, 2015). The most relevant to this study are the shy or introverted, the talkative, and know-it-all students. The more talkative students tend to take over discussion and seminar-based courses, which does not leave much space for the quiet students to participate. These shy students make up a significant portion of classrooms and may reflect back on their experience in high school as some of the hardest and worst of their lives. Each school day involves a bias against these students as the school environment is a long day in a stimulating environment without very much quiet time (Cain & Klein, 2015). To help ease the stressors of the school environment for shy, introverted, and apprehensive students, instructors can allow these students more time to think before answering questions, more opportunities for one on one interaction with both other students and the teacher, and useful strategies for adjusting to the school environment (Thomas-Maddox, 2003). According to Kline (2008) "teachers need to address the students' diversity of thinking in terms of processing information to avoid collision between introverts and extroverts" (p. 144).

Students can feel threatened when they feel uncomfortable in a classroom and feel pressure to participate and become more outgoing. Sparks (2012) examined the experience of quiet students in the classroom and the issue with how instructors observe and rate these students. "Interestingly, teachers who were identified as and who rated themselves as shy agreed, that quiet students would do less well academically, but did not rate them as less intelligent" (Sparks, 2012, p. 16). This disconnect between the actual academic performance of quiet students and teachers' impressions and expectations of

these students is a problem. This phenomenon is also explored in a study from Hughes and Coplan (2010), in which they found a link between shyness, academic achievement, and academic engagement. They found that shyness was negatively related to teacher-rated achievement, but not related to standardized test scores while academic achievement was negatively associated with shyness and positively associated with all measures of achievement (Hughes & Coplan, 2010). Thus, shy students are less likely to be engaged in the classroom, and this can lead to overall poor academic performance, despite potentially high levels of intelligence. Further, one out of every five students has high communication apprehension and those students are disadvantaged by their apprehension while those with low communication apprehension are really benefitted by it (McCroskey, 2009).

The classroom environment and experience can have a substantial effect on the learning process and engagement of students. Nonverbal immediacy and expressiveness from both student and instructors can affect classroom performance, engagement, and success. Instructors who are more aware of nonverbal behaviors and perceive their students as more nonverbally immediate and expressive have better relationships with their students (Baringer & McCroskey, 2000). Instructors want students to succeed and flourish, but it can be particularly difficult to help reach shy, quiet, or more introverted students. Student engagement in the classroom consists of four factors: skills, participation or interaction, emotional involvement, and performance (Rocca, 2010). Each of these four factors are used differently by different students as their goals, personality traits, and motivations in the classroom vary. Each of these factors affect a student's participation behaviors in the classroom.

Participation

In the literature, participation is typically defined as "any comments or questions that the students offered or raised in class" (Fassinger, 1995, p. 27). However, participation in the classroom may signify many different things to different instructors as well as to different students (Rocca, 2010). Most research organizes participation into five categories: preparation (i.e. completing assigned reading), contribution to discussion (i.e. answering or asking questions in class), group skills (i.e. working and collaborating with others in class), communication skills (i.e. verbal, nonverbal, and visual), and attendance (i.e. showing up to class on time) (Rocca, 2010). In-class verbal engagement includes students sharing their own thoughts and opinions in class while out-of-class verbal engagement includes students discussing course material with others outside of class (Mazer, 2013). Meyer's (2009) research on silent participation looked at student definitions of participation and found that students define participation more broadly than simply speaking up in class. Although definitions may vary, instructors agree that participation is important as "a way to bring students actively into the educational process and to assist in enhancing our teaching and bringing life into the classroom" (Rocca, 2010, p. 188). Active participation encourages engagement, learning instead of rote memorization, and group interaction (Rocca, 2010). Instructors can judge and grade participation easily by simply noting who speaks up the most in class and who is reluctant to speak which prioritizes oral communication instead of looking at a wider definition of how students can show they are engaged and learning (Frisby, Weber, & Beckner, 2014).

Meyer's (2009) research asked students to share their definitions and motivations for participation so it could be compared to strategies instructors typically use to encourage class participation. Students define participation broadly and are motivated by factors other than grades (Meyer, 2009). Meyer (2009) found that many students categorize oral participation as reactive or proactive. He describes reactive participation as meaning being prepared to answer a question when called upon by an instructor, while proactive participation means contributing to class discussion without being explicitly asked to do so (Meyer, 2009). Many students still do not participate even when their grade will be negatively impacted by that choice,

> Though students see participation as important, and one third would like to participate more, research suggests that it is not happening, as it is only a handful of students in any given classroom who participate regularly, a phenomenon dubbed 'consolidation of responsibility' (Rocca, 2010, p. 188).

This consolidation of responsibility phenomenon explains how many classrooms function with a very limited number of students orally participating. Those students who allow for a small portion of the class to carry the weight of participation may do so for many reasons.

Students are unwilling or sometimes even unable to participate due to "fear of interrupting, fear of language deficiency, fear of non-fluency, fear of not making sense to others, fear of intellectual inferiority, and fear of making some kind of mistake" (Brown & Pruis, 1958, p. 355). Additionally, for some students participation grades feel like a competition, instead of a way to help or improve learning (Meyer, 2009). Other reasons for low participation include communication apprehension, which will be discussed later.

Students can participate in class in many ways both verbally and nonverbally. Nonverbal communication makes up a majority of our overall daily communication, and most researchers agree that it is at least equally crucial to successful interaction as verbal communication (Andersen, 2009). Because of this, a greater understanding of the role of nonverbal communication in the classroom could lead to the creation of a better learning environment for shy, introverted, and apprehensive students.

Nonverbal Communication in the Classroom

Nonverbal communication includes many acts that are physical and are somewhat intrinsic in human nature. These nonverbal behaviors are also playing a significant and vital role in everyday interactions. Communication scholar Judee Burgoon defines nonverbal communication as "those behaviors other than words themselves that form a socially shared coding system, that is, they are typically sent with intent, typically interpreted as intentional, used with regularity among members of a speech community, and have consensually recognizable interpretations" (Giri, 2009, p. 691). These nonverbal behaviors are so essential that they are the key to making verbal communication effective and make it so even when we are consciously avoiding verbal communication, "we cannot not communicate" (Knapp & Daly, 2002).

Nonverbal communication is made multi-channeled by specific behaviors, known as nonverbal codes or modes. These codes include proxemics, haptics, chronemics, kinesics, oculesics, paralanguage, physical appearance, and environment (Giri, 2009). Proxemics and kinesics are closely linked in the classroom because they cover physical behavior from how people orient their bodies and distance or angle themselves as well as other body language like gestures, facial expressions, and how people relax or tense their

bodies (Giri, 2009). Oculesics is the behavior of the eye, including eye contact and visual gaze. Paralanguage or vocalics is the most extensive category of nonverbal codes which includes voice behavior or ever quality of a person's voice except for the actual verbally spoken words (Nonverbal Communication, 2008).

Proxemics, paralanguage, kinesics, and oculesics combine with verbal communication to create a full picture. Encoding is the communication aspect, and decoding is the interpretation aspect of the complete picture (Nonverbal Communication, 2008). Many nonverbal behaviors are often more subconscious than conscious which leads to verbal communication being the encoded aspect, while nonverbal behaviors are decoded and interpreted by the partner or partners in a communication context. Nonverbal behaviors "convey information, both intentionally and unintentionally, about emotions, attitudes, personality traits, intelligence, intentions, mental and physical health, physical characteristics, social group membership, deception, and roles" (Hall, 2007, p. 162). Decoding of this information is what is essential in the relationship between shy or introverted students and instructors.

This study operates under the assumption that participation can occur in nonverbal ways rather than in the strictly verbal or oral ways prioritized by researchers and educators. One form of nonverbal communication in the classroom is silent participation, which is extensively discussed in Meyer (2009). The students Meyer spoke with noted a wide variety of silent participation behaviors including preparing for and attending class, being nonverbally attentive, taking notes, and listening to others (Meyer, 2009). One student suggested that, "Participation in class is knowing when to talk and when to listen to classmates and the instructor" (Meyer, 2009, p.10). This comment

suggest that participation not only involves knowing when to orally participate, but also knowing when to participate silently by listening. Every student has a different way of participating in class based on what they feel comfortable with and what their motivations are for participating or not. Generally, the students in Meyer's study agreed that there are different levels of participation, but both oral or silent participation should involve thinking critically, listening, and paying attention (Meyer, 2009).

Typically, classroom participation involves verbally speaking in class, but widening the definition to include silent participation connects the idea of student engagement with student participation. Similar to Meyer's (2009) earlier findings, Mazer (2013) created a student engagement scale also includes in-class behaviors that are either silent or oral and in class or out of class. Some examples of the silent, in-class engagement behaviors include listening attentively to the instructor and your classmates' contributions and simply attending class (Mazer, 2013). Out-of-class engagement can also include nonverbal ways of showing academic engagement including thinking about the course material, completing assignments, and even doing additional reading related to the course (Mazer, 2013). This engagement scale shows that there are a wide variety of ways that students are engaged in their coursework beyond simply speaking up and earning participation points. This idea relates closely to a student's reflection on participation from Meyer (2009) that noted "staying alert and engaged in the subject matter is more effective than listening to students voice what is already known" (p. 12).

Taken together, there are ways that students can be silently, or nonverbally engaged and participate, in the college classroom. However, we do not know exactly what these silent behaviors look like and how and why shy, introverted, and apprehensive

students choose to use these instead of participating in the more traditional oral way employed by their outgoing and extroverted counterparts. Given our need to understand more about this, it may be more productive and effective for educators to push for true engagement, rather than simply oral participation, especially for these students.

Shyness and Communication Apprehension in Students

Anxiety and nervousness are normal parts of communication that most people feel at least some of the time whether it be in the classroom or in other interpersonal interactions. Some researchers focus on the internal experience of being shy while others focus on the externally observable behavior (McCroskey, 2009). A useful definition of shyness for this research is "the tendency to be timid, reserved, and most specifically talk less" (McCroskey & Richmond, 1982, p. 460). Introverted students are commonly similar to shy students in that they may be more reserved and talk less, but this may be less about timidity or shyness and more about a need to have time to reflect, recharge, and regroup during a hectic day in the highly social environment of a classroom (Lieberman & Rosenthal, 2001). Some students are both introverted and shy which means they tend to be quieter and less outspoken than their classmates and may be overwhelmed by the classroom environment and participation expectations and requirements. Often shy or introverted students are at a disadvantage in the classroom because they are held to the same standards as their more extroverted and outspoken classmates who do not experience the same amount of communication and participation apprehension.

Communication apprehension refers to the fear and anxiety feel when faced with a communication situation (McCroskey, 2001) Although, some anxiety is normal, those experiencing communication apprehension are likely to have some physical response like

sweaty palms, dry mouth, and other symptoms of nerves (McCroskey, 2001). Participation apprehension, a particular type of communication apprehension, is "avoidance of participation prompted by evaluation apprehension or expectation of negative outcomes associated with participation" (Neer, 1987, p.157). Understanding the effects of communication and participation apprehension is important because it plays a role in both academic success and interpersonal success (McCroskey, Booth-Butterfield, & Payne, 1989). Research has shown that students who experience higher communication apprehension are more likely to drop out of college than those who experience low apprehension (McCroskey et al., 1989). This is likely to be a combination of experiencing anxiety within the classroom and feeling less able to comfortably communicate with peers to form a strong, supportive social group.

Richmond, McCroskey, and Amsbary (2009) found that communication apprehension, behavioral shyness, self-perceived communication competence, and assertiveness are significantly related with two constructs in social phobia: fear and avoidance of performance. McCroskey and Richmond (1982) found that while apprehension and shyness are distinct; both are predictors of communication behavior. In related research, McCroskey (1976) also found that there is a relationship between apprehension and negative self-image and noted that some students have extreme reactions to participation when they suffer from communication apprehension. These students may react by experiencing sickness, panic, anxiety, and depression which can lead to chronic absences and to students dropping the course or switching majors to avoid courses that require presentations or "excessive" participation. McCroskey (1976) also found that there is a negative relationship between a student's level of communication

apprehension and their overall, general achievement including on non-communication or participation measures like standardized tests and grade point average (McCroskey, 1976). Both apprehension and shyness "predict withdrawal and reduced communicative output. Specifically, both would predict less talking" (McCroskey & Richmond, 1982, p. 460). This speaks to the importance of understanding participation apprehension to help all students achieve better in all facets of their education.

Brown and Pruis (1958) discussed student reasoning for not participating and one student stated:

> I was going to say something, but somebody else made another comment then I was afraid my idea was too late. Some of the other kids talk so easily that I don't feel like I can keep up with them – so I don't try. (p. 344).

Rocca (2010) also found that students tend to participate less because of fear of being inadequate to their peers, lack of confidence, low self-esteem, and low assertiveness. Certain things in the classroom may also contribute to some of these factors causing low participation and high apprehension including logistics of the class (e.g., large class size, policies, course format) that may make it more difficult for some students to speak up (Rocca, 2010). Conversely, there are other strategies that can help alleviate these participation anxieties. For example, arranging student seats in a circular manner may help create a more natural, comfortable, social space for class discussion which helps cut down on some participation apprehension (Brown & Pruis, 1958).

All students, whether shy, introverted, and apprehensive, or not, have different goals and motivations for whether or not they participate in their courses and these goals

drive their communicative behaviors. The goals and motivations of shy, introverted, and apprehensive students can be studied within the framework of MGT.

Multiple Goals Theory

MGT is centered on the idea that "communication is purposeful, that individuals commonly pursue multiple goals simultaneously, and the various communication goals frequently conflict (Caughlin, 2010, p. 825). This theory looks at the relationship between relational communication and relational well-being meaning how you interact and communicate with others impacts the overall welfare, happiness, and security of a relationship (Caughlin, 2010). The quality of the relational communication is evaluated by looking at certain conditions "such as which sort of message strategies best meet the pertinent goals in that circumstance" (Caughlin, 2010, p. 844). Communicative goals are the things that individuals are aiming for and motivated by during an interaction (Caughlin, 2010). Multiple goals can and are pursued simultaneously and are primarily automatic and influenced by commonly understood social practice (Caughlin, 2010).

These specific goals that all interactions can be categorized as are relational, identity, and task related. Relational goals are focused on developing or maintaining a desirable relationship between people in the interaction (Scott & Caughlin, 2014). A relational goal in the classroom could be a student desiring to have their instructor have positive feelings about them in order to preserve a relationship with them that may help them in their future education. A relational goal could also include a student desiring to create or maintain a positive relationship with their peers or their instructor in the classroom. Identity goals are those that involve managing the impressions of the people in an interaction which could include preserving autonomy, maintaining dignity, or

negotiating new roles (Scott & Caughlin, 2014). An identity goal in the classroom, for example, would be a shy student choosing not to participate in the effort to maintain their dignity because they are afraid they might embarrass themselves. Task goals are those that directly relate to the primary goal in an interaction (Scott & Caughlin, 2014). Task goals in the classroom involve completing an assignment, answering a question, or other basic classroom actions. A specific task goal that may motivate students to meet participation expectations in the classroom is a desire to get a good grade in the course.

Each of these goals can be primary (i.e., dominant) in an interaction or secondary which means they come from more general motivations and traits in a person's life (Caughlin, 2010). Secondary goals are important because they help shape how the primary goal is achieved (Caughlin, 2010). Despite the titles of primary and secondary, primary goals are not always the most dominant goal for an individual and primary and secondary goals may not always be congruent with one another, Caughlin discussed conflicting goals,

> Various communication goals can conflict with each other...for example, people may forego strategies that would be effective in meeting a primary goal (e.g. gaining assistance) if those strategies might undermine the pursuit of other goals (e.g. maintaining a positive impression. (p. 828)

Conflict between goals may be especially prevalent for shy or introverted students in the classroom. Specifically, while a primary task goal may be as simple as participating by contributing one thought to class discussion, a shy student may feel conflict from their identity goals that motivate them to be quiet and reserved. A student must fight against those anxieties and identity goals in order to meet the simple task goals. Further, this

need to negotiate conflicting goals may also impact the student's ability to achieve relational goals. As the student strives to protect his or her identity, they may damage the relationship with the instructor because instructors are forming impressions of students based off of interactions in the classroom. In the case of the shy or introverted student, then, the instructor may develop a bad impression that would mistake the lack of oral participation as being unengaged or apathetic toward the course.

In Meyer's (2009) research it is noted that there are various motivations for participating or refusing to participate which fits into MGT. Some motivations are internal like a desire to learn, interest in the subject, and a student's mood on a particular day while others are external like the instructor, desire for a certain grade, and class size (Meyer, 2009). A student may be motivated to meet a task goal because of an internal interest in the subject. The same student may also be motivated to avoid participating on the same day because the topic may be something that could embarrass them if they disclose too much (i.e., an identity goal) or because they dislike the instructor and do not desire a positive relationship with them (i.e., a relational goal) or are motivated externally to not participate because they are intimidated by the class size.

MGT is also related to the rhetorical and relational goals theory of instruction. Rhetorical and relational goals theory of instruction assumes that students and teachers both enter the classroom with the desire to have both relational and rhetorical goals met (Mottet, Frymier, & Beebe, 2006). Relational goals included liking, caring, and connectedness while rhetorical goals are those related to learning outcomes and tasks (Kaufmann & Frisby, 2017). These sometimes opposing goals compete with each other and must be balanced in order to succeed in the classroom (Kaufmann & Frisby, 2017).

The experience and behaviors of shy, introverted, and apprehensive students in the classroom is important because each student has different perceptions of the same classroom with the same instructor (James & Yates, 2007). Each individual brings in their own perspective that has been shaped by their experiences, motivations, and goals, which shapes their impression of each course (Kaufmann & Frisby, 2017). This must be taken into account when designing courses and considering the different challenges shy, introverted, and apprehensive students face as opposed to their outgoing and extroverted classmates.

Relational, identity, and task goals help shape message production and also beliefs about goals help shape the meaning of communication (Caughlin, 2010). These three goals serve as a "means of accounting for message construction, but also provide a means of evaluating message quality" (Scott & Caughlin, 2014). How well each goal is met in an interaction speaks to the overall quality and success of the interaction, as well as "the extent to which various goals are achieved without threatening the pursuit of other relevant goals" (Scott & Caughlin, 2014, p. 264). This theory has been applied to a variety of contexts, specifically those featuring interpersonal and family relationships. Extending this theory into a new context, MGT will be applied in the instructional context focusing on the interpersonal interaction between shy, introverted, and apprehensive students and their classmates and instructors. MGT will be used to help answer the central research questions regarding what nonverbal codes are used by students to help meet their relational, identity, and task goals and to understand why students choose to use nonverbal communication the way they do in classroom interactions that necessitate participation.

Summary and Research Questions

It is important to attempt to reach all students to help them meet learning outcomes and be successful both in the classroom and the outside world. Shy and introverted students may make up to as much as 1/2 of a typical classroom which provides some explanation for why the bulk of oral classroom participation falls to only a small number of students (Cain & Klein, 2015, Howard & Henney, 1998). It is unfair to these shy, introverted, and apprehensive students to ignore their different needs, goals, and motivations when creating courses and especially when considering participation grades. Nonverbal communication makes up a large majority of our everyday communication, it follows that nonverbal behaviors should not be discounted or ignored in the classroom, especially those that signal engagement and participation. With this in mind the following research questions have been developed to guide this study:

RQ 1 : Do students who identify as shy and introverted experience communication apprehension?

RQ 2 : How, if at all, do shy, introverted, and apprehensive students perceive they use nonverbal codes to show participation in the classroom?

RQ 3 : How, if at all, do shy, introverted, and apprehensive students perceive they use nonverbal codes to meet their task, relational, and identity goals in the classroom?

RQ 4 : What goals are perceived as most important to shy, introverted, and apprehensive students when faced with participating in class discussion?

The following chapter will overview the research methods that will be used to attempt to answer these research questions in an effort to develop data and ideas that will help future students and educators.

Chapter Three: Methods

Although there is much existing research regarding communication apprehension and participation in the classroom, this thesis seeks to extend this research. Specifically, this research focused on nonverbal communication as a form of participation and frames these participation events using multiple goals theory as a way to understand how shy students may simultaneously meet multiple interaction goals in the classroom. Students may use nonverbal communication in participation to protect themselves and to achieve their relational, identity, and task goals with instructors and peers. To examine this topic, several focus groups with students who characterized themselves as shy, introverted, or apprehensive were conducted to collect data to answer the research questions.

Participant Recruitment

Prior to recruitment research procedures were reviewed and piloted. Participants were recruited through a research participation pool in a school at a large Southern university. Participants were awarded two required research credits to participate in the study. Participation was open to all university undergraduate students over the age of 18 who identified as shy, introverted, or apprehensive. This sample was used as many college courses require class discussions and other forms of class participation.

Participant Screening Procedures

After expressing initial interest in participation, all potential participants (n = 145) took an online survey to assess their eligibility (see Appendix A). As part of the screening, potential participants were asked to confirm they were 18 or older, students at the university, and if they identified themselves as shy or introverted. Self-identification of these characteristics was used instead of having potential participants complete scales

at this time because it is logical to assume that by the time an individual reaches college they are well aware of if they are shy or introverted in the classroom. Following the screening survey, participants who qualified (n = 32) were invited to participate in focus groups. The participants who were not contacted (n = 113) either did not include correct contact information or did not meet the qualifications for this study. All qualified participants were contacted through email to schedule a meeting time; several participants did not respond to multiple attempts to schedule a meeting time (n = 16).

Participants

The final participant sample (N =16) included females (n = 10) and males (n = 6). Participants were freshmen (n = 4), sophomores (n = 4), and juniors (n = 8). A majority identified as Caucasian/White (75%), followed by Asian (12.5%), and Black/African American (12.5%) No other demographic information was collected.

Procedures

Focus groups were the primary method of data collection about the nonverbal behavior of shy, introverted, and apprehensive students and their communication goals during class participation. Focus groups were used instead of one on one interviews because shy and introverted students are likely to experience communication and participation apprehension. These students may be unwilling to participate in one on one interviews with a stranger but may be less apprehensive at the idea of being in a small group of similar students and peers (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Five focus groups were conducted over the course of two weeks early in the Spring 2019 semester. Each group included between two and four participants.

Focus groups were conducted in an effort to create a comfortable and more casual, social interaction between participants and with the researcher. Focus groups were held in private, small group study rooms in a campus library. Snacks were provided to participants. Focus groups allowed for participants to have time to process questions, information, and their thoughts, as well as feed off of each other as the conversation developed (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Each focus group lasted approximately 45 minutes.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants to ensure they were aware of what is involved in this research. Although participants self-identified as shy or introverted in order to participate in the study, they were also asked to complete questions adapted from McCroskey's (1982) Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24) which was used to assess each participants' level of apprehension (See Appendix B). The scale includes 24 items to assess apprehension in group discussion (six items, e.g., "I dislike participating in group discussions," meetings (six items, e.g., "I am afraid to express myself at meetings," public speaking (six items, e.g., "I face the prospect of giving a speech with confidence," and in interpersonal settings (six items, e.g., "I'm afraid to speak up in conversations." According to McCroskey (1982) summed scores for all four dimensions on this scale should range from 24 to 120 with scores below 51 representing people with low communication apprehension, scores between 51 and 80 representing those with average communication apprehension, and scores above 80 representing those with high communication apprehension. According to McCroskey (1982), the PRCA-24 is highly reliable with an alpha regularly above .90 and high predictive validity. The PRCA-24 was reliable in this study (Cronbach's $a = .85$).

Focus group questions were guided by previously discussed research (Mazer, 2013; Rocca, 2010; Caughlin, 2010; Meyer, 2009; McCroskey, 2001). See Appendix C for a full list of focus group questions.

Participants maintained confidentiality by being assigned a number at random in order to identify themselves in the audio recording as well as being assigned a pseudonym for use in the results section. Responses to the focus group questions were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim by the researcher in preparation for analysis. The transcribed focus groups resulted in 47 double spaced pages of data.

Data Analysis

Once data were collected and transcribed, it was reviewed by the researcher to identify main ideas and themes in order to conduct thematic analysis on the data collected in focus groups. Ideas and themes of particular importance include those that fall within the research questions guiding this study (Manning & Kunkel, 2014). Data were analyzed by looking for meaningful content and themes in the data collected from the focus groups. Inductive thinking and open coding were used to make sense of the data and provide more insight into the experiences of shy, introverted, and apprehensive students in the classroom that can help future researchers and educators create a better learning experience for these students (Lindlof & Taylor, 2019; Manning & Kunkel, 2014). Each participant's response to each question was used as the unit of analysis wherein each response could be coded as multiple themes (Lindlof & Taylor, 2019). This study aimed to add new dimension to the existing research on communication and participation apprehension by considering the nonverbal communication habits of shy, introverted, and apprehensive students. Specifically focus group responses were organized by (a) how

shy, introverted, and apprehensive students are using nonverbal codes, (b) how these relate to the task, relational, and identity goals of students, and (c) what goals shy and introverted students prioritize when faced with classroom participation. The emergent themes result in four suprathemes and seventeen subthemes. These themes are discussed in Chapter 4: Results.

Chapter Four: Results

Focus groups were transcribed and coded into four suprathemes: (a) feelings about participation, (b) use of nonverbals, (c) multiple goals, and (d) goal importance with each supratheme including subthemes. The suprathemes are organized by research question and the subthemes within each supratheme are presented in descending order or frequency. Names used in the following sections are pseudonyms to protect the confidentiality of all participants. Quotes are verbatim from the participants.

Research Question One

Research question one asked, "Do students who identify as shy and introverted experience communication apprehension?" McCroskey's (1982) PRCA-24 was used to determine if the participants in this study experience communication apprehension. The scores for participants in this study ranged from 75 to 107 (M = 85.9 SD = 10.36). Thus, all but two participants in this study could be classified as having high communication apprehension. The two participants who could not be classified as having high communication apprehension still fell well within the range for experiencing average communication apprehension and were within five and two points of high communication apprehension respectively. This means that the participants in this study qualified as having communication apprehension across different communication conditions including group discussion, meetings, public speaking, and in interpersonal interactions, and thus, were appropriate for inclusion in the focus groups.

Supratheme One: Feelings about Participation

Although feelings about participation was not an a priori research question, the frequency with which this was mentioned by participants necessitated that this be an

emergent supratheme. With the supratheme named *Feelings about Participation* there were five subthemes, *internal conflict, box checking, guilt, stress*, and *interest in the course* (see Table 1).

Table 1

Supratheme One: Feelings about Participation themes with descriptions and frequencies

Subtheme	Description	Frequency
Internal Conflict	feelings of turmoil and anxiety when deciding whether or not and how to participate	26
Box Checking	participating simply to satisfy an expectation	18
Guilt	negative feelings coming after not participating	7
Stress	higher than average anxiety related to class participation	5
Interest in the Course or Topic	increased participation because of enjoyment of the content	4

The first and most frequently occurring theme, *internal conflict (n* = 26) included participants who expressed feeling much turmoil and anxiety when deciding whether or not and how to participate. For example, Cole noted "I guess I just wish that, especially for those classes that focus on public speaking, sometimes it feels like, obviously, the more anxiety you have over public speaking the more disadvantaged you are." Three participants mentioned multiple instances of having a question for an instructor and choosing to stay quiet and just find out the answer themselves later whether through an email or extra hours of independent studying because that seemed "easier" to them. Meredith noted one such time when she forced herself to speak up despite her anxiety,

> I'm just going to take the zero for participation, but then I just got out of my comfort zone and I was like, okay, let me raise my hand, I mean, I got nervous, I got hot, I felt like my voice was crackling, but I just had to do it. He [the instructor] enjoyed my responses and I'm like 'how? I don't feel like I did a good job.'

Tori perfectly illustrated the sort of internal dialogue and struggle that many participants noted experiencing in the classroom,

> I think that I'll have an answer in my head and then I'll second guess myself, 'what if it's wrong?.' And I don't want to say it out loud and then everybody know that I said a wrong answer and then by the time I actually work my confidence up to say it out loud, someone else has already said it and the conversation's moved on to something completely different.

Shy, introverted, and apprehensive students are not on the whole just sitting through each class period feeling comfortable and confident, they are struggling with how and when to participate.

The second theme, *box checking* (*n* = 18*)* was participants' reports of verbal participation to simply satisfy an expectation. In these cases, students verbally participated for each class period by saying one thing whether it be answering a question, asking a question, or adding something to discussion and then feeling satisfied or at least comfortable enough with their participation for the class period to check off a box that they had completed it. Tori shared an experience that included both of these first two themes,

Tori: I'm constantly think about what I'm going to say and I don't know that it always comes out the way I want it to. Last week, I had a thought in my head. It didn't convey they right way coming out. The professor took it completely the wrong way and well, that was wrong, it's not what I meant.

Facilitator: When that happened did you try to clarify what you were saying?

Tori: I just kind of shut down and that was it for the class. I said something, even though it didn't go well, that was it.

She felt conflicted about what she had to say and felt she presented incorrectly, but instead of trying to correct it, she just accepted that she had checked the box for the day and that was good enough. Cole said he participates in discussion when it is required "because the anxiety of not doing it is worse." Meredith said "I think I do enough to get by. I don't feel like you need all that extra." One participant, Ally, when asked if she considered herself shy or introverted responded after the other participants in her group, "Even just now, I waited to go last."

The third major theme, *guilt* (n = 7) comes when they feel they missed their chance to participate and contribute to class. Anna shared her feelings and experiences,

I've had several instances where even in classes where participation isn't required, but something will be discussed that I do have an actual opinion on or I have something to contribute and people will start to go around and say whatever is that they have to say. I'll just wait for somebody to say whatever it is that I'm going to say because I just, I don't know, I feel like whatever I'm thinking, somebody else can be thinking because I'm not an overly complex person. Somebody else is probably thinking the same thing, so I wait for somebody to say

> whatever it is that I'm thinking and then… I don't want to be the one to have to say it and then the discussion is like wrapping up and eventually it will be like whatever I was thinking hasn't been said yet. So, I'm like okay well this is my chance. Like I can say this, nobody has contributed this yet and then like they'll go for like the final round of 'okay, so does anyone else have anything to say' and I'm like this is your chance, do it, just say whatever it is and then there's something that is like nope, don't do it and then they'll be like alright, we're moving on. And then I have all this regret, because it's like, what I had to say could have been insightful to somebody, why didn't you just say it, it's not that hard. There's always like this ton of like guilt that's associated with not contributing.

Ally shared a story from a course when she felt too anxious and her instructor gave her permission to not give a presentation, but she felt guilt afterwards,

> I felt relief, but then everyone was asking me like 'hey, why didn't you go?' and I just told them I forgot. So, I was embarrassed about that, but then I was more relieved I didn't have to go. Then my conscience weighed on me and I was like I should have just gone and gotten it over with and gotten my grade up.

Logan shared that he feels guilty about times when no one, including himself will answer an instructor's question,

> I could have answered that because it kind of wastes time for everybody if they ask a question and nobody responds for 30 seconds when I could have just answered it, so now I feel bad that like I could have saved us that time.

When asked what they would want their instructors to know about their shyness or introversion, participants had the strongest response out of all the points that were discussed during the focus group which led to the next theme of *stress* (n = 5) associated with giving presentations or participating in class discussions, a few even shared that they had dropped classes in which they had an A, just to avoid having to give another speech. Amanda encouraged instructors to begin

> Paying attention to each student and their strengths and definitely don't push any student whether they're extroverts or introverts. If they don't want to speak, just move on and move forward so that way nobody becomes uncomfortable because once you get into an environment where it is more comfortable to speak and participate, more people will, but when, especially at the beginning of the semester and when you're new in class, you won't want to speak out unless that's just your personality.

Some participants had a belief, whether accurate or not, that instructors simply look at the simplest markers of participation and instead should expand how they measure participation in the classroom. Participants suggested that instructors consider attendance, lateness, quality of note taking and class preparedness, and other silent participation behaviors when assessing participation grades for shy, introverted, and apprehensive students.

A final theme that emerged within students sharing their feelings about participation was *interest in the course or topic* (n = 4*).* Logan shared "It's pretty much for the grades and then I'll participate a little more if I actually enjoy the class or I enjoy the topic." Other shared this sentiment and had experience where they either enjoyed the

topic and the class and were able to push through their participation apprehension and actually enjoy and feel relatively comfortable with the discussion process and classroom environment. Tori shared

> I think [that instructors should] let us lead our own path. The fear of being called on is greater for me than anything. I would rather do it on my pace and once I get comfortable with that class and that setting, I'd like to be able to say it when I'm comfortable.

There is a common misconception that students who do not participate are not prepared or just are not trying hard enough, but the results of this study found that this is frequently not the case. Instead students are often in a state of internal conflict when faced with class discussion or some sort of verbal participation task. Despite this internal conflict, many persisted with the goal of checking off a box. Whether participating or not, students often expressed feelings of guilt associated with participating as an apprehensive student.

Research Question Two and Supratheme Two: Use of Nonverbals

Research question two asked, "How, if at all, do shy, introverted, and apprehensive students perceive they use nonverbal codes to show participation in the classroom?" In response, nonverbal codes are consciously used by students in the classroom to show participation and engagement. Two themes emerged within this section, *nonverbal engagement* ($n = 23$) and *nonverbal avoidance* ($n = 2$). Within the theme of nonverbal engagement there were four subthemes, *nodding* ($n = 6$), *notetaking* ($n = 7$), *eye contact* ($n = 5$), and *seat selection* ($n = 5$) (see Table 2).

Table 2

Supratheme Two: Use of Nonverbals themes with descriptions and frequencies

Theme	Subtheme	Description
Nonverbal Engagement ($N = 23$)		
	Nodding ($n = 6$)	nodding instead of verbally responding to questions in class
	Notetaking ($n = 7$)	taking and purposefully displaying notes during class
	Eye Contact ($n = 5$)	maintaining eye contact with instructor or classmates
	Seat Selection ($n = 5$)	choosing a desk close to the instructor to facilitate engagement without verbal participation
Nonverbal Avoidance ($N = 2$)		behaviors like avoiding eye contact, activities not related to class

Regarding nonverbal behavior to show engagement and participation, Joaquin said he used "nodding that I understand or agree, or if he's asking a question not actually verbally saying yes, but nodding." Another participant, Tori, admitted to consciously trying to control her body language, saying "I maybe think about my body language more than anything because I tend to kind of sit back and cross my arms and try to appear that I am participating more than I might actually be." Many responded positively to the concept of silent participation. Rebecca felt that "just by taking notes, and listening, and learning you're engaging in participation."

Many participants also directly mentioned their interactions with their instructors and the nonverbal messages they send to their instructors to indicate engagement. Holly detailed her specific classroom strategy,

> I try to sit up and have all my notes and everything ready and like my pencil in my hand and following the professor around, but I definitely don't do that all the time. I'll be on my phone too and I know that they can see me and what they're thinking in that moment…I try to be as attentive as possible and like you said earlier, coming prepared to class is a way to nonverbally communicate. I'm someone who will read the textbook, take notes on the textbook, bring those notes in and then add to those notes in class so they'll see that I have a full notebook already and I'm just adding things in and highlighting things. I think that that communicates that I'm actively trying to learn the material so I think that that says something about me too.

Students are thinking about and considering their nonverbal behavior in the classroom, both in order to give a good impression to the instructor, as well as to make their own learning experience as easy and anxiety free as possible. Many students mentioned purposefully choosing a seat towards the front of the classroom near the instructor so that they could avoid feeling like they were addressing the classroom full of their peers directly and instead interacting directly with the instructor. Logan shared his experience,

> When I'm looking at the teacher I don't see the 25 other students around me so it seems like it's just a conversation, but I think one time for some reason, we had to switch seats and I was talking in the back of the class and I just felt a lot more

> uncomfortable just because I had gotten used to just sitting in the front and talking to the teacher basically.

Students are negotiating their nonverbal communication and participation in class consciously by nodding, using eye contact, thinking of what methods they use for notetaking, and navigating their seat selection in class to the best of their ability and to their advantage.

These students sometimes feel some insecurity regarding their possible input in the classroom and instead choose to participate nonverbally instead of verbally. Holly shared,

> I can be engaged and still like listening and like taking notes and thinking about everything in my head while not speaking. I don't always have something to say about every single topic and sometimes, when I raise my hand if I'm just saying a comment, I feel like I'm interrupting and then it's like disrupting the class and then it's pushing us back and then it's all my fault that we're behind so I don't really like doing stuff like that.

Although, *nonverbal avoidance* was rarely reported, there were some students who used nonverbals strategically to avoid engagement. Amanda shared an alternative approach for using nonverbal behaviors to avoid participation

> Whether you're putting your head down and looking at your paper as if you're trying to read over what's being talked about. So that way, they don't call on you…Sometimes with teachers, they know that and they don't call on you, but other teachers see that as like a way to call you out which can sometimes be really uncomfortable.

Holly noted some common nonverbal behaviors seen in the classroom included being on your laptop and other activities that are not explicitly related to class may deter the instructor from expecting or forcing engagement from the student.

Research Question Three and Supratheme Three: Multiple Goals

In addition to their conscious use of nonverbal codes in the classroom, shy, introverted, and apprehensive students also negotiate different goals and motivations within the classroom. These responses explicitly answer the second research question which asked, "How, if at all, do shy, introverted, and apprehensive students perceive they use nonverbal codes to meet their task, relational, and identity goals in the classroom?" The results are present using three theory driven subthemes and in descending order: *task goals*, *identity goals*, and *relational goals* (see Table 3). Within the theme of *task goals* there were two subthemes, *doing the lowest amount of participation possible to earn an adequate grade* (n = 14) and *learning* (n = 7). Within the theme of *relational goals* there were two subthemes, *relationship with their instructor* (n = 13) and *relationships with their classmates* (n = 4).

Table 3

Suprathemе Three: Multiple Goals themes with descriptions and frequencies

Theme	Subtheme	Description
Task Goals ($N = 21$)		
	Doing the Lowest Amount of Participation Possible to Earn an Adequate Grade ($n = 14$)	meeting the basic requirements for the course and then not participating any more
	Learning ($n = 7$)	participating as an aid to learning and getting something out of the course
Identity Goals ($N = 18$)		being seen in a positive light, hardworking, reliable, trying their best
Relational Goals ($N = 17$)		
	Relationship with Their Instructor ($n = 13$)	Prioritizing relationship with instructor over relationships with peers
	Relationships with Their Classmates ($n = 4$)	Prioritizing relationships with peers over relationship with instructor

Task goals. In response to RQ 3, the most frequently reported goal was *task goals* ($n = 21$). Some of the task goals participants mentioned included getting a good grade, learning, and generally meeting the requirement for an assignment or course. Tori mentioned a specific task that motivated her to participate in one of her courses:

> We take a quiz at the end of class and grade ourselves and our participation so I always want to score myself that way and I want to do it honestly too so I think that's why I participate to complete that task at the end.

The task goal of the participants were straightforward and as expected when discussing the classroom setting. Within task goals, students often mentioned only wanting to do the

lowest amount of participation possible to earn an adequate grade. Participants sought to complete the basic participation requirements for an assignment or a course and then nothing beyond. Logan strives to "meet the requirement of whatever is listed that you have to complete and then stop talking pretty much" while Thomas will go beyond to earn extra points, "As long as I am meeting the goal, then that's sufficient. I think the other motivating factor is if there's extra credit to where you need to exceed the goal then I will try to go for that extra credit."

Next several participants reported a specific task goal of wanting to learn. Holly said, "I am in college to learn things that are going to be useful for me so, if participating means getting that out of it then that's a goal of mine." Anna's task goal transcended both doing the minimal amount and learning, stating "Definitely getting a good grade, obviously. But aside from that, getting something valuable out of whatever it is I'm learning. Something that I can apply to whatever I'm going to end up doing in the future." As will be discussed later, these task goals compete with both the identity and relational goals which may explain why the motivation to learn and earn a good grade is not always enough to get shy, introverted, and apprehensive students to speak up in class.

Identity goals. In response to RQ 3, the second most frequently reported goal was *identity goals* (n = 18). Students wish to be seen in a positive light, both as someone who knows what they are doing and someone who is trying their best in the classroom. Specifically, apprehensive students want to be seen as hardworking, focused, reliable, and even someone that would be an asset to a class and/or a group project. Amanda said, "not necessarily because I would be the leader in it, but because I would be beneficial [to the group]." Other participants took a different tack when considering how they want to

be seen by the other people in the classroom. For example, Zach responds to speech assignments with an interesting approach to portraying a desirable identity saying, "I feel it's best to just kind of joke around and act like everyone's enjoying it and that you enjoy it too, in order to kind of, you know, sound better." In a similar approach, Amanda wants "to be [seen] as somebody that is very relaxed and easy going so I could be somebody that is available when needed…somebody that's approachable, but you don't feel like you have to always be going to them." Overall, it seems that shy, introverted, and apprehensive students want to succeed at what is required of them and be seen in a positive light by both their classmates and their instructors.

Relational goals. In response to RQ 3, the third most common goal of apprehensive students was *relational goals* (n = 17). Students desired to build and maintain relationships with both peers and instructors. Yet, relational goals sometimes conflicted with task and identity goals creating a unique dilemma for shy, introverted, and apprehensive students about how to navigate multiple goals. For example, apprehensive students may have more barriers to meeting relational goals when their identity goals had not been met. Vanessa noted that when she did not speak up during class (perhaps creating an undesirable perception of student identity), this caused an issue when students were asked to work together or discuss something in small groups,

> I noticed there were times that we would get to talk and discuss something with the other people in our class and there weren't as many people that wanted to talk to me just because I hadn't normally said things in class before.

Similarly, Rebecca was adamant that although she often feels too uncomfortable to answer questions in class she wants to portray a competent student identity and have a

positive relationship with her instructor, “because I’m too shy. It’s awkward to me. But I do let him know, and every now and then I’ll shoot him an email to let him know that I am trying to engage and that I’m trying to learn.” Three participants noted making a point of staying a few minutes after class or attending office hours in order to build a relationship with the professor instead of speaking up during class and in front of their classmates. This allowed them to negotiate multiple goals they were trying to achieve with a focus on the relational goal. Thomas shared a positive consequence of this behavior,

> I’m trying to make sure that I have a good relationship with the professor, that I’m talking with them, that I’m actually engaging with them. I’d rather talk with them after class, like two minutes on the way out the door. There have been classes I’ve taken where just the good relationship, and they’re not supposed to, but they have given me a bump to the next grade level just because I was active with them.

Participants seemed to value the potential relationship with their instructor even prioritizing it over relationships with their classmates. Logan said,

> I don’t really care too much about other people in my class, like what they…I mean, I would rather the teacher know me as a person that pays attention because then, in the end when they are giving you your grade and stuff, they’re the ones that matter. Your relationship with them is what matters for your grade, which is what I really care about, not my relationship or how my other peers see me.

Alternatively, other participants (n = 4) also valued their relationships with their classmates. Ally was the only participant who seemed to primarily value her relationships with classmates,

> I guess I kind of force myself to participate in classes…to get to know the people in it better and strengthen the connections I have with them, rather than with a teacher in a 400 person class who's not going to remember my face.

Vanessa shared that she valued both types of relationships,

> To be connected and get a good relationship with your professors and the other peers that are in my college because there's not like a ton of people who will be in it and especially in my class so it really, you need to have those good connections to help each other out.

Overall, shy, introverted, and apprehensive students are using nonverbal codes to handle some of their classroom interactions and to meet their task, identity, and relational goals with both peers and instructors. Consistent with MGT, each of the goals are not perceived to be of equal importance to these students and even conflict with one another.

Research Question Four and Supratheme Four: Goal Importance

Research question four asked, "What goals are perceived as most important to shy, introverted, and apprehensive students when faced with participating in class discussion?" By far, *task goals* ranked first among the participants for what goal they perceived as most important and relevant to their experiences as shy, introverted, and apprehensive students (n = 16) (see Table 4).

Table 4

Supratheme Four: Goal Importance themes with descriptions and frequencies

Subtheme	Description	Frequency
Task Goals	earning good grades, understanding the material, noted as most important	16
Conflicting Goals	conflict between task, identity, and relational goals	10

Most of the participants noted that earning good grades and understanding the material were among their biggest motivations to participate. Thomas went as far as to say "Grades are really the only thing at this point that are motivating me to participate in any way. Again, if I had my choice, I never would [participate]" Another participant, Vanessa stated her motivations plainly,

> Definitely task goals are most important to me. I like to get what I need to do done and if that means I don't participate as much in a group or let the other people talk, like I'd rather do that and just get what I need to do done.

While all of the participants specifically identified task goals as most important to them, they also brought in elements of their identity and relational goals during the focus groups. These discussions centered on multiple elements and goals highlighted the occurrence of *conflicting goals* (n = 10) (see Table 4).

When students experience conflicting goals, they prioritize one goal over the others. For example, Rebecca clung particularly strongly to her personal identity, "I'll know the answer, but I just can't bring myself to answer the question, not even for extra credit. I stay introverted." Many of the participants expressed identity goals of being seen as a competent student. However, classroom participation expectations led to feelings of

discomfort at being seen by their classmates, and particularly their instructor, as someone who does not understand the material or who is wrong about something. Also prioritizing identity goals, Beth explained,

> I think being wrong is just one of the issues, but with me, I personally don't mind being wrong. I'd rather be right, but it's also kind of the nonverbal communication that you get afterwards. Like people look at you different even though you tried to say something, if it was wrong, they give you a different kind of look, it makes you feel kind of uneasy.

In this example, the student did not focus on their own nonverbal behaviors for appearing competent, but their identity goal was threatened by the nonverbal reactions they received from others.

Although participants admitted to valuing task goals the most, they also considered relational goals, noting that they also attempt to build some semblance of a relationship with their instructors. However, given their apprehension, these participants often chose to build relationships through email to avoid some of the anxiety producing face to face communication strategies for building these relationships. Amanda attempted to meet both identity and relational goals by emailing with her instructor because "that way they might not necessarily believe that I'm a very outgoing student, but they know that I pay attention and am willing to participate when I have to."

While some students were motivated to build their relationships in the classroom, others were only motivated to do so by the need to develop positive connections in order to meet their eventual academic and career goals. In other words, task goals might be the

priority but identity or relational goals might be considered a means to an end. Amanda illustrated this concept by saying,

> Although the task oriented goals are why we are here at college. I think in some cases especially with certain majors and with certain classes it's good to build relationships to help push your tasks and how well you do them forward. Building relationships in your harder classes can help you when it comes to midterm and final season.

In this example, a student may want to protect their identity as a shy or introverted individual but be pushed by their task goals to both participate in class and make attempts to build relationships that may help them with those same task goals. Several participants expressed a desire for their relational goals to be more valuable to them but were unable to realistically or comfortably resolve the conflict between this desire and their personal identity as introverted or shy. Holly almost perfectly summarized how task, identity, and relational goals exist simultaneously and conflict with each other for a shy or introverted student,

> The relationship goals are the least important to me, but they should be more important. I'm always upset that I don't have more friends or that I don't have any faculty that I can have write recommendation letters for me or something like that, but I just don't do anything about it. The task goals are probably the most important to me, just because of the grades that I need, but the identity goals are the ones I'm most aware of at all times. Even though the task goals are the most important to me because my grades are the most important, they might still take

second priority to how I feel. If I'm too anxious, if I really feel like I cannot do it then that one is going to win out over my grade.

This illustrates the complex process and dilemma that shy, introverted, and apprehensive students are facing in classrooms every day as they strive to manage multiple goals.

Students are using their nonverbal behaviors to show that they are trying to stay engaged in the classroom and whether it be through taking detailed notes, avoiding using their phones and computers during class time, positioning themselves in a certain way in the classroom to ease their discomfort, or interacting with the instructor more directly rather than in front of a classroom full of their peers.

Summary

The results of this study help to further illuminate the experience of shy, introverted, and apprehensive students in the college classroom. The participants in this study shared a great deal of complex feelings about classroom participation from feeling internal conflict, desiring to just check a completion box, guilt, stress, along with how interest in the course affects their experience. In response to the four research questions guiding this study, the results showed that students do use nonverbal codes in the classroom to both show their participation and avoid participation as well as to help meet their task, identity, and relational goals. Participants also expressed that while they are most motivated by their task goals, relational and identity goals also play a large role in the classroom leading to conflict between goals. These results are discussed in more detail, including practical and theoretical implications, in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Implications

The results of this study supports that shy, introverted, and apprehensive students are less likely to participate in class and often feel a great deal of anxiety and turmoil surrounding courses where they are required to give presentations, speeches, or even just orally participate in discussion. These students, are, in general, concerned about their amount of participation in an average class and either wish they could change something about themselves or change things about the course to make it easier for them. Nonverbally, participants reported several strategies to appear engaged despite their anxiety, while others reported nonverbal strategies to avoid engagement. These students primarily reported task goals for the classroom, followed by identity and relational goals related to their participation. Importantly, these goals intertwined with one another and in some cases were conflicting goals that the students navigated in a participatory learning environment. We know that the majority of students are not participating in the classroom regularly (Howard & Henney, 1998) and we also know that many of these non- or low-participatory students actually experience apprehension when faced with the requirement to participate verbally. The results of this focus group research point to a need within the field of instructional research. Specifically, although there is much existing work related to communication and participation apprehension and we know that these are things that students struggle with, there is less known about the actual experiences, motivations, and goals of these students and what can be done to help these students succeed in the college classroom and particularly the communication classroom. In this chapter, the major themes that emerged in the data will be discussed and both practical and theoretical implications will be presented.

Feelings about Participation

As instructional techniques have moved away from more traditional lecture techniques and towards stressing the importance of student engagement and participation (Rocca, 2010), this has created what could be considered an unfair classroom environment for shy and introverted students. These shy and introverted students are often experiencing communication and participation apprehension (McCroskey, 2001; Neer, 1987). The participants in this study confirmed White's (2011) findings that students who are reticent to speak up in class should not automatically be considered unengaged and even disrespectful, but instead may be experiencing internal conflict, stress, and even guilt in response to common classroom participation situations. The results also supported previous findings that interest in the course subject as well as desire to learn can serve as motivations for shy and introverted students to do more verbal and nonverbal participation even if they experience apprehension (Meyer, 2009). This concept of motivation is also seen in relational and rhetorical goals theory wherein each student brings in a unique perspective shaped by their experiences, goals, and motivations (Kaufmann & Frisby, 2017).

RQ 2

Existing research supports the idea that there are several ways to participate beyond simply speaking up in class. Rocca (2010) discusses five categories including; preparation, contribution to discussion, groups skills, communication skills, and attendance. Meyer (2009) introduced a concept of participation that specifically includes silent, nonverbal behaviors like simply showing up to class and listening to others. Consistent with this previous research, participants in this study discussed using

nonverbal behaviors like nodding, visually following the professor as they move about the classroom, and taking notes. These participants noted the utility of these nonverbal behaviors to show engagement and participation without having to actually orally participate. Interestingly, participants also noted fear of not making sense, fear of making a mistake, and fear of interrupting as reasons for not participating orally as was mentioned in Brown and Pruis (1958). Not surprisingly, then, these results provide additional support that students are using nonverbal codes in the classroom to show participation and avoid those common fears associated with oral participation.

RQ 3

The participants in this study discussed their shyness and participation as it relates to task (i.e., academic), identity, and relational (i.e., interpersonal) goals. This is consistent with McCroskey et al's (1989) findings that communication apprehension plays a role in both academic success and interpersonal success. Specifically, the participants noted that their task goals included doing the basic amount of participation in order to succeed on an assignment or in a class overall. Identity goals were also salient in the classroom with many students noting wanting to be seen in a positive light by their instructors and peers. Finally, some participants also noted feeling as if they were missing out on meeting relational goals and on some beneficial interpersonal contact and relationships as a result of their apprehension, shyness, and introversion.

Although this study was framed by MGT, self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1980, 1985, 1991) can also offer a framework for understanding a student's goals in the classroom. SDT focuses on how social and cultural factors influence a person's motivation, well-being, and the quality of their performance (Deci & Ryan,

2000). An individual's perceptions of autonomy, competence, and relatedness are related to motivation and engagement in activities, therefore if someone feels that these needs are being met in some social context they will perform better and feel better (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Applied to this study, a student may be able to better meet their task goals in the classroom if their relational goals and identity goals are being met subsequently leading to the motivation to participate despite any anxieties about doing so.

Although many of the findings were consistent with previous research, new findings also emerged. Research conducted by McCroskey and McVetta (1978) suggests that students who experience communication apprehension have a more positive experience in the classroom with seats arranged in a horseshoe shape rather than in more traditional straight rows. However, in this study, participants shared they feel more comfortable and experience less communication and participation apprehension when they had the freedom to pick their spot in class than when placed in an assigned spot. This seems to serve two purposes for participants. First, picking a spot closer to the instructor as the front of the room was a strategy to communicate nonverbally that they are engaged in class. Second, picking their own spot allowed students to avoid seeing the faces of as many of their classmates in the event they are called on or even volunteer to participate verbally. This desire to be able to choose a seat in class and to avoid being placed in a group that would require them to give up their preferred place in the classroom, could also be theoretically driven by a student's desire or goal to preserve their autonomy and maintain their dignity (i.e., identity goals, (Scott & Caughlin, 2014). Thus, in response to RQ 2, students identified all of the goals included in MGT as salient

in this context. This study provides further insight by exploring how those goals are prioritized by students.

RQ 4

Not surprisingly, all the participants placed task goals as the goals they hold as most important in the classroom. Perhaps, this is appropriate for the classroom context where students should be motivated by and focused on grades, learning, and academic achievement. That said, the classroom is still in many ways a social environment and many courses are striving to help student develop skills beyond simply memorizing facts and figures, but also learning skills that will benefit them in their future endeavors, both professional and social. Because of this, it is important to explore what goals (task, identity, or relational) shy, introverted, and apprehensive students are perceiving as most important in the classroom. An important element of MGT is that various communication goals can conflict with each other which can lead individuals to avoid certain strategies that would be useful in meeting primary goals if those strategies may have a negative impact on their secondary goals (Caughlin, 2010). This was certainly found to be the case for the shy, introverted, and apprehensive participants in this study.

Although many of the participants valued task goals and noted wanting to achieve a quality grade, they also noted sometimes doing the minimum to earn participation credit and sometimes not even being able to achieve that. As was found in Rocca (2010) some participants shared that they participated less out of fear of being seen as incorrect or inadequate to their peers and even more so, their instructors. Some participants were more able than others to push through their apprehension, shyness, and introversion for the sake of achieving a desired grade or even maintaining a positive relationship with

their instructor. In other words, achieving task, identity, and relational goals in the classroom seemed to be highly motivating for students.

The participants were able to showcase the conflict that occurs when their goals in a classroom communication situation do not align or directly contradict one another. To manage this conflict, participants prioritized one goal, often tasks, over the identity or relational goals. Some participants made an effort to prioritize their relational goals to serve as a means to an end of meeting their task goals by forcing themselves to interact with their peers and instructors in hopes of benefiting their task goal of doing well in the course. Additionally, although many students has the desire to manage conflict between their task, identity, and relational goals, they were unable to resolve the conflict between goals. It is important to provide students with strategies to resolve them.

Theoretical Implications

Although MGT is more typically used for interpersonal interactions, as evidenced in this study it is applicable to the classroom setting which is sometimes considered to be interpersonal. This is the first study to my knowledge that applies MGT to the classroom setting. Shy, introverted, and apprehensive students are navigating a complex situation and set of goals in the classroom, especially when faced with situations with required or strongly suggested participation. A variety of task, identity, and relational goals were noted by the participants when asked to consider their experiences in the classroom which further shows that MGT is appropriate for this study and for future use in instructional communication research.

This study supports MGT by focusing on the task, identity, and relational goals that shy and apprehensive students have in the classroom. This theory helps guide

analysis of communication situations and how they impact an individual's welfare, happiness, and security in a relationship (Caughlin, 2010). In the classroom, shy, introverted, and apprehensive students often feel stress, guilt, and conflict as a result of their lack of participation. Each student is negotiating their communicative task, identity, and relational goals and interactions in the classroom.

Perhaps not surprisingly, task goals would be considered the primary for all of the participants' choices in the classroom, but secondary goals proved to shape how the primary task goals were achieved (Scott & Caughlin, 2014). According to Caughlin (2010), although some goals are primary while others are secondary, this does not always mean they are dominant which is where conflict between goals comes into play. This is seen in the classroom when shy or introverted students are very motivated by their task goal to get a good grade in the class but are unable to achieve that as well as they would like because they are being held back by conflict between their task goal and identity goal and fear of being wrong and being seen as not smart or good enough by instructors and peers.

MGT proved to be a strong theory to apply in this context and it would be worthwhile for instructional scholars to continue to apply MGT into their research. The classroom and educational process are complex and MGT can be used to explain parts of what is happening during classroom interactions.

Practical Implications

Research supports that a large number of students in any given classroom identify as shy or introverted and are experiencing communication and participation apprehension (Cain & Klein, 2015). It is a mistake to not carefully consider the experiences of these

students who make up a significant portion of the student population in order to develop pedagogical methods that could potentially improve their experience in the classroom. Further, this understanding can also improve the experience of instructors who sometimes struggle to get students to participate in class regularly. When asked what they would want instructors to know about them as shy, introverted, and apprehensive students, there was a generally enthusiastic and passionate response from many of the participants. Participants wanted instructors to know that they do care about their courses, and they do want to learn and do well in the course, even if they do not want to participate. Participants also wanted instructors to have greater awareness of the stress that apprehensive students face when asked to verbally participate in class. Many of these students are trying their best and want their instructors to be aware of that even if they do not participate verbally at all or very little. The goals of this study were to help shy, introverted, and apprehensive students in an effort to improve their classroom experience, but also to be able to provide more information to instructors regarding the experience of these students. The following strategies are based on the results of this study and may be helpful in achieving the goals of both students and instructors.

Practical implications for instructors. Anecdotally, in many conversations with other instructors and researchers, many have expressed the importance of exploring the experience of shy, introverted, and apprehensive students in the classroom. The results of this study can be considered by instructors to help them design their courses in ways that may help shy, introverted, and apprehensive students feel more comfortable and more likely to want to participate.

Based on the findings in this study a few practical implications for instructors can be extrapolated. First, instructors should let students choose their own seats in the classroom and give students some freedom in choosing where in the classroom they present from whether it be for more formal presentations or informal small group activities. Many participants expressed that they preferred sitting in the front of the classroom, closer to the instructor, and avoiding seeing the faces and nonverbal communication of their classmates. This models what is more likely to happen in the professional world outside of the classroom context, where employees choose where to sit in a meeting, for example. Instructors allowing students to choose where they sit and where they present from provides practice for the real world. To help facilitate this, instructors can build assignments that more organically allow students to present from where they are most comfortable. On presentation days, desks could be arranged in a circle or horseshoe shape as suggested by McCroskey and McVetta (1982) and students could present from their seats instead of having the pressure of standing up in the front of the classroom. Other ways of presenting projects and even speeches could also be used to help students feel more comfortable. One way of doing this could be to allow students to video record their presentations and speeches instead of requiring every presentation or speech be done in class in front of an audience. This would allow students to practice their public speaking and presentation skills without apprehension and anxiety that comes with speaking in class for some students. A second behavior that instructors can implement into their classrooms and teaching styles is to increase their awareness and acceptance of nonverbal and silent engagement behaviors. Some participant suggestions for this included collecting class notes from students either daily or from time to time to

assess if students are staying in engaged with class content. Third, it would also be worthwhile for instructors to clearly articulate what their definition of participation is and what their expectations are for their students. Different instructors consider different behaviors when determining participation grades which may make it more difficult for shy, introverted, and apprehensive students to know exactly what is expected of them which may increase their anxiety in the classroom. A fourth way instructors can work to improve the classroom experience of shy, introverted, and apprehensive students is to allow a variety of other chances for apprehensive students to express themselves, their knowledge, and their abilities. This could include one-on-one meetings, small group activities, opportunities to write down an answer to a question or point for discussion rather than verbally expressing it. This would perhaps require instructors to expand their definition of participation to allow for silent participation behaviors and other forms of classroom engagement.

Practical implications for apprehensive students. Based on this research there are also a few behaviors that students who are apprehensive about verbal participation can bring into the classroom. First, students can be more strategic about where they position themselves in the classroom. Some participants noted having a more positive classroom experience when they positioned themselves in the front of the room and within direct eyeline of the instructor. This allows these shy, introverted, and apprehensive students to develop a sort of nonverbal rapport with their instructors that can show that they are engaged in class without verbally participating. Students can also use other forms of communication with their instructors instead of forcing themselves to speak up during class. For examples, students can speak with their instructor during the

few minutes before and after class, email with the instructor about any questions or concerns, and attend office hours, all of which will help a student develop their relationship with their instructor. Further, this relational development can also benefit their task goals without having to verbally speak up during class. Students who are concerned that their shyness or introversion is being interpreted as disinterest or lack of understanding should strive to increase their own awareness of their own nonverbal communication and use positive nonverbal behaviors identified in this study to show engagement (e.g., eye contact, nodding) with their instructor and their peers. Students communicating directly with instructors can also ensure that they are on the same page with their instructors about what is considered participation and how to meet the instructor's expectations.

Limitations and Future Directions

The results of this study should be considered with limitations in mind. The first limitation is in regard to participant recruitment. Participants were students who are required to participate in research for course credit, some may have been more interested in earning the credit than providing quality, thoughtful responses. However, it is important to note that this did not appear to be an issue evidenced by the rich data provided by the focus groups. The sample was pulled from students taking some sort of communication course within the university. Expanding the sample may have produced a wider variety of experiences and data shared by students because communication courses are more likely to encourage participation as well as discuss communication concepts like nonverbal communication which may have primed some participants to be more explicitly aware of their nonverbal behavior before attending the focus groups.

The second limitation is that only shy and introverted students were included in this study. It would add an interesting dimension to this research to also included the perspective of instructors of non-apprehensive students in the classroom setting. Especially when considering nonverbal behavior, it would be worthwhile to study what other people in the classroom are actually perceiving about the shy introverted students in the classroom. Many of the participants held a belief that instructors may not be aware of their nonverbal engagement behavior, but this may in fact be untrue and is worth examining further. Additionally, the participants' perceptions of their own behavior may not be entirely accurate and brining in the perspective of their instructor and classmates may help paint a more complete picture.

The third limitation is that because this study required volunteers who were willing to share their experiences openly among strangers in focus group settings, it may not have attracted the most shy and introverted students. Although all the participants scored within the range of average to high communication apprehension on the PRCA-24 measure, they still may not be the shy and introverted students who struggle most in the classroom because those students may be unwilling to participate in this type of research. Future research could combat this giving these students the option to participate in research through the use of surveys and other methodology that would allow shy and introverted students to feel more comfortable and less apprehensive about sharing their experiences.

Fourth, this study is limited in that students discussed their task, identity, and relational goals and indicated that conflict among the goals was common. This research did not explore the tactics that students can use to communicatively negotiate these

common goal conflicts. Instead, this is an important initial look into the experience of shy and introverted students in the classroom, but there is a great deal left to explore and further opportunities to apply MGT to the classroom setting.

Although theoretical saturation was reached during the five focus groups, a fifth limitation is that the final sample was two-thirds female and 75% Caucasian/White which may have skewed the results toward a more limited point of view than a more diverse sample (Lindlof & Taylor, 2019). A larger, more diverse sample of participants may have altered the results by including a wider range of experiences, course designs, majors, and student demographics which can be address in future research.

Future research could take these limitations into consideration and expand to attract students from a more diverse range of courses, genders, and ethnicities. Limited demographic information was collected in this study and although certain assumptions can be made about the sample based of what information that was collected, future research should collect information on age, major, international or domestic student, and traditional or non-traditional student. Collecting this information would add more context to the data to support analysis and understanding of the data. It would also be valuable to expand this research beyond focus groups and conduct one-on-one in-depth interviews with shy and introverted students, as well as classroom observations of these students to get a well-rounded view of what is actually happening in the classroom. Because this study was guided by a priori theoretical concepts in an interpersonal theory, it is possible that other goals are also salient in the classroom. Future research should continue to corroborate the existence of these goals and verify that additional goals do not merge in this unique instructional context.

Conclusion

It is an alarming fact that 90% of class time interactions are done by only a small number of students in a class and up to half of the students in a typical class are not participating at all (Howard & Henney, 1998). As educators and researchers, we should not be satisfied with these numbers and we cannot and should not blame it on student apathy or the distraction of social media and technology in the classroom. Including participation points and requiring participation is not always enough to motivate students, particularly those that are shy, introverted, and apprehensive, to engage in thoughtful participation. This research shows that many students are struggling with how to handle these situations and manage their apprehension and even anxiety regarding participation. Students are managing their task, identity, and relational goals in order to negotiate how much verbal participation they can both get away with in a class and also how uncomfortable they are willing to make themselves. Students are being thoughtful about their participation and engagement in their courses, even if silently and nonverbally, and this should be further studied in order to improve the educational experience for shy, introverted, and apprehensive students.

Appendix A: Qualtrics Recruitment Survey

Are you 18 or older?

Yes

No

Are you a student at the University of Kentucky

Yes

No

Do you identity as shy or introverted?

Yes

No

Other (Please Explain) _____

Please enter your official school email address below to be contacted about scheduling a time participate in a focus group if you qualify.

_____

Appendix B: Demographic Survey

What is your gender?

Male _____

Female _____

Other (Please Specify) _____

What is your ethnicity?

Asian _____

American Indian/Alaskan Native _____

Black/African American _____

White _____

Hispanic/Latino _____

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander _____

Other (Please Specify) _____

What year are you in college?

Freshman _____

Sophomore _____

Junior _____

Senior _____

Indicate the degree to which each statement below applies to you by circling whether you: Strongly Disagree =1; Disagree = 2; Neutral =3; Agree =4; Strongly Agree = 5.

I dislike participating in group discussions.	1	2	3	4	5
Generally, I am comfortable while participating in group discussions.	1	2	3	4	5
I am tense and nervous while participating in group discussions.	1	2	3	4	5
I like to get involved in group discussions	1	2	3	4	5
Engaging in a group discussion with new people makes me tense and nervous.	1	2	3	4	5
I am calm and relaxed while participating in group discussions.	1	2	3	4	5
Generally, I am nervous when I have to participate in a meeting.	1	2	3	4	5
Usually, I am comfortable when I have to participate in a meeting.	1	2	3	4	5
I am very calm and relaxed when I am called upon to express an opinion at a meeting.	1	2	3	4	5
I am afraid to express myself at meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
Communicating at meetings usually makes me uncomfortable.	1	2	3	4	5
I am very relaxed when answering questions at a meeting.	1	2	3	4	5

While participating in a conversation with a new acquaintance, I feel very nervous.	1	2	3	4	5
I have no fear of speaking up in conversations.	1	2	3	4	5
Ordinarily I am very tense and nervous in conversations.	1	2	3	4	5
Ordinarily I am very calm and relaxed in conversations.	1	2	3	4	5
While conversing with a new acquaintance. I feel very relaxed.	1	2	3	4	5
I'm afraid to speak up in conversations.	1	2	3	4	5
I have no fear of giving a speech.	1	2	3	4	5
Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while giving a speech.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel relaxed while giving a speech.	1	2	3	4	5
My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I am giving a speech.	1	2	3	4	5
I face the prospect of giving a speech with confidence.	1	2	3	4	5
While giving a speech, I get so nervous I forget facts I really know.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C: Focus Group Questions

- Engagement Questions – introduce participants to the subject and get them comfortable
    - To be part of this study, you had to identify yourself as shy or introverted. Why do you consider yourself shy or introverted?
        - Is there a difference in your opinion?
    - How do you define classroom participation?
        - *Explanation for participation: The basic definition of participation is "the act of taking part in or contributing to something." Classroom participation can be organized into five categories: preparation, contribution to discussion, group skills, communication skills, and attendance. Reactive participation is being prepared to answer a question, while proactive participation means contributing to discussion without answering a specific question. Silent participation includes preparing for and attending class, listening, taking notes, being nonverbally attentive.*
    - When you hear "nonverbal communication," what do you think of? Any specific behaviors or actions?
        - *Explanation for nonverbal communication/codes: Nonverbal communication makes up most of our daily communication because it makes our verbal communication more effective and meaningful. Nonverbal behaviors convey information, both intentionally and unintentionally about emotions, attitudes,*

personality traits, intentions, and intelligence to name a few. There are several nonverbal communication codes including proxemics and kinesics (physical behavior and body language), oculesics (eye behavior), paralanguage (vocal behavior like tone, pitch, rate of speech).

- Exploration Questions – Open ended, gets to the center of the topic
    - Think of your experiences in the college classroom, describe a time when you felt anxiety or shyness about participating in a class discussion.
        - What did you do?
        - Why did you do that?
        - How did your peers respond?
        - How did your instructor respond?
    - Describe a time when you were expected to participate in a class discussion, but you chose not to.
        - How did you feel?
        - What did you do?
        - Why did you do that?
        - How did your peers respond?
    - Think about your amount of participation in an average class, how satisfied are you with your participation level? Would you like to participate more?
    - Consider what we discussed about nonverbal communication; do you participate nonverbally in class? What does that look like?

- How do you show that you are engaged in class when you don't verbally participate?
- What motivates you to participate in class?
- What holds you back from participating in class?
- *Discuss MGT: Every person has goals that they are motivated by during any interaction. These goals are put into three categories: task, identity, and relational. Task goals include those related to specific class activities and your overall academic success. Identity goals include those relating to the impression you want to give to others and perhaps your fear of embarrassment when participating. Relational goals include wanting to maintain a positive relationship with both your classmates and your instructor. Sometimes these goals can conflict with each other, for example your task goal to get a good grade on an assignment could conflict with your identity goal to maintain your identity as a quiet person and that identity goal could conflict with your relational goal to be liked by your instructor.*
- What are your task goals in the classroom?
- What are your identity goals?
- What are your relational goals?
- Of these goals, which do you think are most relevant to your experience as a shy student and why? How do these relate to your motivations to participate discussed previously? How do these goals relate to your decisions not to participate?

- Exit Questions – Trying to find anything that may have been missed
    - Is there anything else you would like to share?
    - Is there anything else you would like to reflect on?
    - Is there anything you would like your instructors to know about your shyness/introversion/apprehension as it relates to your class participation?

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